

HONORING FIREFIGHTER JUSTIN  
BLUBAUGH

**HON. JOHN JOYCE**

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, May 18, 2021*

Mr. JOYCE of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Firefighter Justin Blubaugh for his 16 years of service with the Meyersdale Volunteer Fire Department in Somerset County, Pennsylvania.

Firefighters' commitment and service to our community are invaluable. Volunteer firefighters often are called on to respond to emergencies of all types. From battling structure fires to conducting search and rescue operations, volunteer firefighters respond immediately whenever disaster strikes. These heroes often go above and beyond—they teach first aid, educate students about fire and other dangerous hazards, and even install car safety seats for children. Through their diverse and often-difficult work, volunteer firefighters provide lifesaving services and are a staple of our local community.

Firefighter Blubaugh has worked throughout his career to serve the people of Somerset County. On behalf of Pennsylvania's 13th Congressional District, I thank him for his work to protect life and property in our community and wish him continued health, safety, and success.

#### NATIVE AMERICAN CHILD PROTECTION ACT

SPEECH OF

**HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, May 12, 2021*

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 1688, the "Native American Child Protection Act," ("NACPA") which authorizes three programs aimed at ensuring that Tribes have the tools they need to treat, prevent, investigate, and prosecute instances of family violence, child abuse, and child neglect involving Native American children and families.

The original version of these programs passed as part of then-Senator John McCain's Indian Child Protection and Family Violence Prevention Act, but the programs were never fully funded and have not been reauthorized by Congress.

This legislation would do the following:

Establish a new National Indian Resource Services Center to provide tribes with technical assistance, advice, and training on addressing child abuse, family violence, and child neglect.

Support efforts to improve intergovernmental coordination between federal and tribal personnel responding to those issues.

Authorize grants through the Indian Child Abuse Treatment Grant Program to establish treatment programs and culturally appropriate services for the victims of child abuse and neglect in Indian Country.

Authorize formula grants to Tribes under the Indian Child Protection and Family Violence Prevention Program to support the hiring of caseworkers and the establishment and ex-

pansion of tribal programs that investigate, prosecute, and prevent incidents of child abuse, child neglect, and family violence in Indian Country.

American Indian and Alaska Native children and their families who experience child maltreatment or family violence often have few opportunities to find accessible, culturally-appropriate services to help them address the trauma from these events.

Furthermore, prevention funding is almost non-existent for this population, removing opportunities to prevent trauma—before it happens and avoid families and children slipping into crisis.

The federal government has a solemn responsibility to ensure that the most vulnerable members of Indigenous communities—children—are protected.

Guarding against crimes committed against our Native communities will always be one of my highest priorities, and this bill is a strong step in the right direction.

Native communities must have the support and resources necessary to help children learn, grow, and live healthy lives.

In Texas and across the country, too many Indigenous children have been victims of violence, abuse, and neglect.

The Federal government has an urgent responsibility to these children, and we should be doing all that we can to help them secure a bright future.

This legislation fulfills a promise made years ago to address the impact of abuse of Native children in federally-run boarding schools and prevent anything like it from ever happening again.

This promise was never fulfilled because these programs were never funded, and the Tribes never received the support they needed.

This is why we must pass this bill: to finally uphold our responsibility to help Tribes ensure that Native American children are safe and healthy.

This legislation will help ensure that the Federal government is upholding its commitments to help tribes and tribal organizations protect the next generation.

Every Native child must have access to community-based, culturally appropriate services that help them grow up safe, healthy, and spiritually strong—free from abuse, neglect, sexual exploitation, and the damaging effects of substance abuse.

For this reason, I ask my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to vote in support of H.R. 1688.

#### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. MICHAEL K. SIMPSON**

OF IDAHO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, May 18, 2021*

Mr. SIMPSON. Madam Speaker, on Roll Call No. 138 on Agreeing to the Waters of California Part B Amendment En Bloc No. 1 for H.R. 2547, the Comprehensive Debt Collection Improvement Act and Roll Call No. 143 on passage for H.R. 1065, the Pregnant Workers Fairness Act, I was unable to vote.

Had I been present, I would have voted NAY on Roll Call No. 138, and YEA on Roll Call No. 143.

IN RECOGNITION OF CAPTAIN  
GEORGE SIRAGUSA

**HON. JENNIFER WEXTON**

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, May 18, 2021*

Ms. WEXTON. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Captain George Siragusa (USN, Ret.) on his retirement as the longtime Board Chair for Virginia's 10th Congressional District, Service Academy Advisory Board.

Captain Siragusa has served on the board since 2010 and as the Virginia District 10 Board Chairman since 2014. The board has a body of over fifty military officers who annually screen high school students applying for a Congressional Nomination, a requirement for eligibility to obtain an appointment to the four Federal Service Academies. Under Captain Siragusa's leadership, the board has successfully recommended nomination and subsequent admission to over 150 future members of the United States Armed Services to the four service academies. In addition to his leadership to the board members, Captain Siragusa has served as an advisor and mentor to many of the candidates as they entered this rigorous and challenging endeavor.

Outside of his service with the Federal Service Academy Advisory Board, Captain Siragusa is a private sector consulting firm entrepreneur, investor, and adviser. He is also a seasoned leader-instructor at the university level for 10 years, having taught at the United States Naval Academy, George Washington University, Wake Forest University, and currently George Mason University where he is an adjunct professor at their Volgenau School of Engineering. He also serves as a Senior Business Adviser and Counselor to over 100 clients in his portfolio at the George Mason's Enterprise Center's Small Business Development Center.

I congratulate Captain Siragusa on his retirement and thank him for his service to Virginia's 10th Congressional District. I wish nothing but the best in all his future endeavors.

HONORING FIREFIGHTER RICK  
SANNER

**HON. JOHN JOYCE**

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, May 18, 2021*

Mr. JOYCE of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Firefighter Rick Sanner for his 26 years of service with the Meyersdale Volunteer Fire Department in Somerset County, Pennsylvania.

Firefighters' commitment and service to our community are invaluable. Volunteer firefighters often are called on to respond to emergencies of all types. From battling structure fires to conducting search and rescue operations, volunteer firefighters respond immediately whenever disaster strikes. These heroes often go above and beyond—they teach first aid, educate students about fire and other dangerous hazards, and even install car safety seats for children. Through their diverse and often-difficult work, volunteer firefighters provide lifesaving services and are a staple of our local community.

Firefighter Sanner has worked throughout his career to serve the people of Somerset County. On behalf of Pennsylvania's 13th Congressional District, I thank him for his work to protect life and property in our community and wish him continued health, safety, and success.

## MSI STEM ACHIEVEMENT ACT

SPEECH OF

**HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, May 17, 2021*

Ms. JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, the United States is facing grave challenges on many fronts. We are only beginning to emerge from a global pandemic, with the outlook still uncertain. Our critical infrastructure, our Federal agencies, and companies across all sectors are being hacked. We are racing to mitigate the destructive effects of climate change. Our economic competitiveness is threatened as competitors like China invest heavily in science and technology.

To solve these problems, we need a cadre of trained scientists and engineers pushing the boundaries of what we know and what we can achieve. So far, we have led the world in science and innovation with a STEM workforce that does not come close to representing the diversity of our nation. When a Black woman, Dr. Kizzmekia Corbett, is at the center of developing the mRNA vaccine that is helping us conquer the pandemic, we treat it as exceptional, instead of expected. If we maintain such a narrow perspective on who should be a scientist, if we continue to leave behind so much of our nation's brainpower, we cannot succeed.

The good news is, we have highly successful models for increasing the diversity of STEM graduates. Minority serving institutions have long played a critical role in training and educating students of color in STEM fields. Student bodies at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs), and Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs) are the most diverse in the nation. These and other minority serving institutions (MSIs) offer access to STEM education and a pathway to research or other STEM careers to students who might otherwise have limited opportunities. MSIs employ tailored initiatives, policies, and practices that meet students where they are, academically, financially, and socially, while moving students toward higher levels of academic achievement.

For instance, HBCUs play an outsized role in educating African American STEM graduates. While HBCUs make up only 3 percent of the nation's colleges and universities, they graduate 32 percent of African American students earning bachelor's degrees in the physical sciences, 29 percent in mathematics, and 27 percent in the biological sciences. One quarter of African Americans with STEM PhDs earned their bachelor's degree at an HBCU.

MSIs have a proven track record of recruiting, retaining, and graduating underrepresented minority students with STEM degrees. However, more investment and outreach is needed to enable MSIs to fully realize their potential to contribute to the STEM workforce. The MSI STEM Achievement Act pro-

vides for increased transparency, accountability, and accessibility of Federal STEM education and research funding for MSIs. The bill directs the Government Accountability Office to compile an inventory of programs targeted to MSIs and make recommendations for how agencies can increase competitiveness of MSIs in such programs. The bill also supports research on the challenges and successes MSIs have had in contributing to the STEM workforce, including support for MSI Centers of Innovation to help scale up successful practices pioneered at MSIs. Finally, the bill requires the Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) to issue policy guidance for Federal science agencies to improve outreach to MSIs in order to increase awareness of and competitiveness in agency funding opportunities.

I want to thank Rep. WALTZ for joining me in introducing this bipartisan legislation. I also want to thank the 24 organizations and institutions that have endorsed H.R. 2027.

MSIs have charted a course to developing the diverse STEM workforce we need to ensure continued leadership in science and innovation. Let us empower these institutions, and others, to build on that success. I look forward to seeing a companion in the Senate and working with my colleagues in both bodies to get this legislation enacted.

## CHIEF STANDING BEAR NATIONAL HISTORIC TRAIL FEASIBILITY STUDY

SPEECH OF

**HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, May 12, 2021*

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 810, legislation which authorizes the Department of the Interior to conduct a feasibility study of the Chief Standing Bear National Historic Trail.

From his birth on the banks of the Niobrara River in Nebraska until his death in 1908, Chief Standing Bear spent his life in a constant struggle to gain equality and justice for Native Americans.

Chief Standing Bear and the Ponca Tribe were forced in 1877 by federal treaty to leave their homeland in Nebraska for Indian Territory in what is now Oklahoma.

The hardship of travel and the conditions of Indian Territory caused the deaths of many members of the tribe, including Chief Standing Bear's son.

Determined to bury his son in his homeland, Chief Standing Bear led 30 members of his tribe back to Nebraska, where federal authorities detained him.

As a result, Chief Standing Bear became the first Native American recognized as a person in a federal court decision rendered in Omaha at the trial following his return.

Standing Bear's case, *United States, ex rel. Standing Bear, v. George Crook*, started in May 1879. The U.S. government argued, "that [Standing Bear] was neither a citizen, nor a person, so he could not sue the government."

Standing Bear's lawyers argued that under the Fourteenth Amendment, Standing Bear and his fellow Ponca were both citizens and people and entitled to the same constitutional rights as other citizens of the United States.

The court fundamentally agreed with Standing Bear, writing, "That an Indian is a PERSON within the meaning of the laws of the United States . . ."

Following the decision, the judge released Standing Bear and his people, and they returned to their lands by the Niobrara where Standing Bear finally buried his son.

The Chief Standing Bear National Historic Trail tracks the 550-mile path traces the journey the native Poncas were forced to make in 1877 to Indian Territory in present-day Oklahoma.

The trail also marks the route the tribe took in 1879, when they returned to their homelands in present-day Nebraska.

The nation has invested a great deal in protecting national parks and historic places due to their unique beauty, typographical features, or historic relevance.

The stories that make up the American experience have, for far too long, been limited to those of one group of Americans.

The limited view of what is of value or interest to the American public has changed with the establishment of a Native American History Museum and most recently the opening of the National African American History and Culture on the Mall.

The "whites-only" version of American history must end and at the same time we can make room for other American stories.

The history of the United States is more complex and immensely richer than would be apparent if we only consider the history of one group of people.

For this reason, last Congress I rose in support of the Emancipation National Historic Trail Act, which helped establish the Emancipation National Historical Trail, which will tell the story of African Americans and will preserve for future generations the rich history of the newlyfreed slaves who journeyed to Houston in search of economic and political opportunity, and greater religious and cultural freedom.

Similarly, the development and designation of the Chief Standing Bear trail is one more important step in the ongoing goal to educate the public about Chief Standing Bear and the Ponca tribe's forced relocation to Oklahoma.

This story transcends race, ethnicity, culture, and serves as a starting point to bringing about a greater understanding of tribal sovereignty, tribal rights, human rights, and equality for all peoples.

The establishment of this trail will increase the general public's knowledge and awareness of the story of Ponca Chief Standing Bear, including his journey to Oklahoma and back and the historic court case in Omaha.

For this reason, I ask my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to vote in support of H.R. 810.

## HONORING FIREFIGHTER RANDY DIRIENZO

**HON. JOHN JOYCE**

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, May 18, 2021*

Mr. JOYCE of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Firefighter Randy Dirienzo for his 36 years of service with the Meyersdale Volunteer Fire Department in Somerset County, Pennsylvania.